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Virginia's New Right-Turn-On-Red Law Is Effective Jan. 1, 1977

The coming of the new year will mean a dramatic change in the driving habits of Virginia motorists.

Beginning January 1, 1977, drivers in Virginia can make a right turn on a red light after coming to a complete stop and yielding to all other cards and pedestrians. The right turn on red will be permitted at all intersections in the state unless there is a clearly-marked sign stating **"NO TURN ON RED".**

The new law was passed by the 1976 session of the Virginia General Assembly to help motorists save time and gasoline (estimated savings in gasoline would exceed three million gallons yearly) and to comply with the Uniform Vehicle Code (most states, including neighboring West Virginia and North Carolina, now allow right turns on red).

Extensive studies conducted in Virginia before the passage of the new law indicated no difference in either the frequency or severity of accidents where right turns on red are permitted. In fact, there was a slight decrease in accident potential at the intersections permitting right turn on red.

The Highway Safety Division urges all drivers to take advantage of the savings in time and gasoline by using the new law. And the Division recommends the following steps for making a safe right turn on red:

1. Come to a complete stop at the red light. When you are behind another turning vehicle, never proceed without coming to a complete stop.

2. Make sure there is not a **"NO TURN ON RED"** sign posted at the intersection.

3. Check to see that no cars are coming from your left or from across the intersection from you.

4. Make sure there are no pedestrians crossing the intersection.

5. If there are no cars or pedestrians in the roadway, turn right and go on your way.

The Highway Safety Division of Virginia says the new law, properly observed, can be safe for pedestrians and motorists. The Division urges pedestrians to be alert to the new law and to be watchful for cars turning the corner.

Letter To The Editor

To the Editor of the Times-Virginian,

How long shall we tolerate in this civilized country the instrument of torture known as the leghold or steel jaw trap? This trap is a barbarism inconsistent with present day conceptions of justice to the lower orders of life. Besides professional trappers presumably many others have witnessed the anguish of an animal struggling to free itself from the grip of relentless steel.

Anyone who had jammed a finger can imagine somewhat the agony of an animal captured in the commonly used device. The animal may suffer hours or days. Can women decorate themselves with furs at the cost of so much pain and can men profit by such business?

Probably millions of animals are still trapped each year with the leghold trap. However, the State of Florida banned its use in some circumstances through the action of its Game and Fresh Water fish Commission. Hawaii banned it through legislation. Will not the public demand the abolition of cruel trapping methods?

Bills to reduce the cruelties of trapping have been introduced in the Congress of the United States. Among more recent ones are S. 1602 and H. R. 790. Will not readers wish to write their representatives in Congress at the Senate Office Building and House Office Building, Washington, D. C. urging passage of such humane measures?

The Association for the Protection of Fur-bearing Animals, Vancouver, B. C. encourages invention of humane traps.

YULE LOG

Come, bring with a noise,
My merrie, merrie boyes,
The Christmas log to the firing

— Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Christmas Music

I do not know a grander effect of music on the moral feelings than to hear the full choir and the pealing organ performing a Christmas anthem in a cathedral, and filling every part of the vast pile with triumphant harmony.

— Washington Irving (1819)

The Pastor Speaks

"The Messiah is coming to save me." That is really what Isaiah had in mind, and yet now we know that Christ was eight hundred years away.

So often, Christians try to translate the majestic promises of the Bible into terms of personal, material benefit. At Christmas, children and their parents both count the "shopping days". Was Christ really born so that Johnny could get a new bicycle or Mary a chemistry set? Is Christmas merely a convenient excuse to get away from home and visit relatives?

The Messiah is coming to save me. True enough, and yet my personal salvation is only one part of the salvation of all mankind. Unless I concern myself with a larger vision of God's mission, then any personal promises are worth little to me.

Even a simple statement of joy and love like a Christmas card sometimes becomes an attempt to harvest a great repayment. Maybe some people give so many because they hope to get as many in return. Christmas is coming for my benefit only.

The fact that when Isaiah hopefully signed about a coming Messiah he was looking for a way out of his personal troubles and a way out of the national troubles does not obscure the more important message of salvation for all humanity that stands at the center of the promise.

How do we recognize the ways that Christ is coming today? What are we doing to celebrate his presence and his "becoming?" We must accept the fact that our personal hopes are finally only a part of the hopes of a world which even now rarely hears about Christ, and which even more rarely understands what it hears because of the selfishness of those who tell the story. Christmas may be the best time to remember that sort of coming.

Rev. James M. Becker, Pastor
Appomattox United Methodist Circuit

IT'S RICH

Mince pie symbolizes the riches of the East, brought by the Wise Men.

The Sunday School Lesson

COMMENTS BY HERBERT C. BRADSHAW

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 26, 1976

The Promise Fulfilled
Scripture: Luke 2:21-38

"mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples." Luke 2:30-31.

Although Luke was a Gentile and wrote for a Gentile readership, he does not minimize in his Gospel the belief that in Jesus the prophetic promises to Israel of a Messiah were fulfilled. In his account of the birth and infancy of Jesus, Luke clearly shows God at work in history to prepare the world for the incarnation of His Son. He gives the time setting of Jesus' birth during the tax listing ordered by the Roman Emperor Augustus to show how God used human agencies to bring His purposes to pass, in this instance that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the home town of Israel's greatest king, David. In the account of the dedication of the infant Jesus, as the firstborn of His earthly parents, Luke portrays Him as the focal point to whom the history and prophecy of ancient Israel had been moving.

The promise of Messiah, which featured God's messages delivered to Israel by prophets as early as the eighth century B.C. -- the golden age of prophecy -- was a part of God's spiritual preparation of the world for the coming of the Savior. The preparation had begun long before that, in God's call to Abraham. The migration of Jacob's family to Egypt and the deliverance of Jacob's descendants from slavery in the land of the Nile were a part of that preparation. So was the giving of the law in the wilderness of wandering. The promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob of a homeland for their descendants in the land of Canaan foreshadowed the promise of Messiah who would be the Savior, not only of Israel but of all the world.

When the time came for the purification of Mary after childbirth and the dedication of her firstborn, in accordance with the law of Moses, Joseph, Mary and the infant Jesus made the easy and convenient trip from Bethlehem to the Temple in Jerusalem. This is one more instance in which Luke shows that Joseph and Mary were strict observers of the Jewish law and brought up Jesus in that observance. Thus Jesus submitted to the law in order that He might fulfill it for mankind. Later, in the Sermon on the Mount, He was to declare that He had not "come to abolish the law and the prophets . . . but to fulfill them." He was to fulfill them on behalf of a humanity which could not fulfill them.

Jesus came to Israel when its people were hoping for Messiah. In a time when they were under the firm control of a powerful government, the Roman Empire, and their cultural heritage was being threatened by the popularity, even in Jerusalem, of Greek customs and culture, staunch Jews had reached a state of desperation. In their despair, the coming of Messiah was their only hope. Yet just a few recognized Him when He came. Two did so when Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple.

Simeon had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would live to see "the Lord's Christ." (Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Messiah, both meaning "anointed.") He and an aged prophetess, Anna, recognized in the child Jesus Messiah.

Jewish expectation identified Messiah as a king, a political successor to David. In their anticipation of Messiah, Jews, particularly those who chafed under Roman authority, pictured Him as a king who would deliver Palestine from subjection to Rome and set up an independent kingdom. Some of the prophecies encouraged this interpretation. It overlooked the prophecies which foretold Messiah as Suffering Servant. Simeon, however, saw Messiah in clear perception of His true role, the agent of God's salvation, a light to reveal the knowledge of God to all peoples and at the same time one who would suffer and bring suffering.

In all the joy which attended the birth of Jesus, Simeon sounds the first note of sorrow and suffering. Were these not present, Jesus would not be identified fully with human kind, for joy and gladness, sorrow and suffering are elements we all experience in the common lot of humanity. Luke portrays the fulfillment of the promise of Messiah in true incarnation: birth as a human baby, the growth of a Jewish boy in a pious home which observed as much as humanly possible the law of Moses. The Man whose coming is occasion for the greatest gladness, but whose life and mission are attended by suffering and sorrow.

(Based on cyprighted outlines produced by the Committee on the Uniform Series and used by permission.)

Classics Provide Yuletide Melodies

In this century, hymns and carols of the Nativity have been composed by Peter Warlock ("Bethlehem Down") and Gustav Holst ("Mid-Winter")—among others.

Often, hymns and carols have been set to the music of classic composers.

One example is, "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," by Nahum Tate. Music for this came from Handel's opera, "Siroe," as adapted by Richard Storrs Willis.

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